

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, IS

SUBJECT: EXPROPRIATION OF ALBRIGHT INSTITUTE PROPERTY

1. ERIC MYERS, HEAD OF ALBRIGHT ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE (FORMERLY AMERICAN SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY) IN JERUSALEM TELEPHONED CONSUL GENERAL OCTOBER 21 TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE EXPROPRIATION LARGE PART OF INSTITUTE'S PROPERTY IN EAST JERUSALEM FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION. MYERS EARLIER IN THE DAY HAD BEEN ALERTED BY ANOTHER INSTITUTION WHOSE PROPERTY ALSO AFFECTED, THAT "FINAL" HEARING ON MATTER BEING CONDUCTED BY PREFECT OF JERUSALEM MORNING OCTOBER 21. MYERS' ATTORNEY WAS UNABLE TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON SHORT NOTICE BUT MYERS ATTENDED HEARING AND AFTER ACRIMONIOUS DISCUSSION SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING TWO WEEKS' POSTPONEMENT.

2. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES STATE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WILL BE BUILT ON VACANT LOT BEHIND ALBRIGHT PROPERTY AND THAT APPLICABLE ISRAELI ORDINANCES PERMIT CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR LANE "ACCESS" ROAD. MYERS POINTS OUT CONSTRUCTION SITE ALREADY SERVICED BY TWO LANE ROAD RUNNING BEHIND ALBRIGHT PROPERTY, AND HE SUSPECTS REAL AIM OF CITY PLANNERS IS TO CONSTRUCT LARGE FOUR LANE HIGHWAY TO LINK UP CENTER OF TOWN WITH NEW HADASSAH HOSPITAL ON MT. SCOPUS.

3. EVEN THOUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT MAY BE SOMETIME IN FUTURE, MYERS CONCERNED THAT APPROVAL BY PLANNING AUTHORITIES

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NOW WOULD HAVE AFFECT OF DRASTICALLY REDUCING VAUE OF INSTI-

TUTE'S LAND. (APPARENTLY NEW ROAD WOULD GO AROUND BUT CLOSE TO INSTITUTE'S BUILDING.)

4. MYERS HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIS LAWYER (SHEHADEH), WHO IS ALSO ORGANIZING OPPOSITION OF OTHER LAND OWNERS WHO MAY BE AFFECTED. PROPERTY IN QUESTION ALSO CONTAINS ANTIQUITIES (MASONRY BELIEVED TO BE PART OF "THIRD WALL") AND MYERS SEEKING TO ENLIST OPPOSITION OF MINISTRY OF ANTIQUITIES.

5. MYERS, WHO HAS ONLY RECENTLY ARRIVED, IS VERY MUCH EXERCISED, AND IS REPORTING FOREGOING TO PARENT ORGANIZATION IN CAMBRIDGE, MASS., AMERICAN SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH, WHOSE PRESIDENT IS FRANK M. CROSS, JR. I TOLD MYERS I THOUGHT HE WAS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PROTECT THE INSTITUTE'S PROPERTY AND SAID THAT THE CONSULATE GENERAL WOULD ALSO INQUIRE FROM THE PLANNING AUTHORITIES AS TO THEIR EXACT PLANS AND TIMING. FOREGOING IS REPORTED IN CASE PRESIDENT CROSS OR HARVARD UNIVERSITY RAISES MATTER WITH DEPARTMENT.
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